

## How to produce practical accomplishments of the WLN meeting?

*by*

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- Current position and issues of the WLN
- Plan for practical accomplishment
  - Establishment of administration office
  - Building Website
  - Secure Government's support

### 1. Current position and issues of the WLN.

This year, we celebrate the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the Women Leaders' Network. Every year, women leaders in APEC regions have met to discuss and prepare recommendations and have submitted to the Ministerial Meeting. I believe that these activities have played a role in informing the importance of recognizing gender in government policy, in particular, in economic policy. However, the functions of the WLN are still at a conceptual level and cannot exercise specific impacts.

Now, how shall we lead the WLN in the next 10 years?

The word, "sustainable" has become a buzz word worldwide, and it has become a national task. Governments, entrepreneurs, scholars, and private organizations in every economy are all trying to find out a method in developing the prosperity of sustainability. I believe that the WLN is focusing on the same concerns. It is time for us to accept the criticism of 'meeting for the sake of meeting,' and 'one time event,' with heart-breaking regrets. In that sense, this session of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting is very important. In the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the WLN held in Korea last year, we were presented with various opinions to reinforce the network. I recall many people had agreed on these two points - 'Why aren't these implements realized?' and 'Are we still not prepared enough?' Therefore, I would like to present a plan to produce actual accomplishments of the WLN.

### 2. Establishment of an administration office of the WLN.

First, is the establishment of an administration office (Secretariat) of the WLN. We most certainly need a full time administration office. The administration office shall be a working organization consisting of operation members representing each economy. Of course, we need office space and full time employees. The biggest role of the administration office shall be to analyze and evaluate how the agenda discussed in the meeting of every year are affecting each economy in APEC regions.

Monitoring becomes the basic data for all growth strategies. It is easy to analyze accumulated results. The future strategy of the WLN in the next 10 years shall be formulated based on this data. Administration office can also help support groups or organizations operated in the hosting economy of the WLN meeting every year in practical works. The WLN's networking capability is well known to all members through the past meetings. However, members now want a better and improved service. In addition, we also need to encourage more women leaders to participate in the WLN. The administration office shall perform the role of coordinator to provide the participants of the annual WLN meeting with better services. Operation managers of the hosting economy can receive information of previous meetings from the WLN administration office and can receive assistance in the know-how of the meeting operations.

### 3. Building the WLN Website.

Second, it is to build the WLN Website. The most frequent opinion in discussing the reinforcement of the WLN's networking capability was the building of a website. However, until now the WLN has not had its own exclusive website. Every year, the hosting economy has operated temporary websites for the meetings. The establishment of an administration office will allow for the operation and maintenance of the website as well. An organized networking through offline meetings can exercise substantial and sustainable power, going beyond the limit of time and space. Its importance cannot be emphasized enough. The WLN's website should focus primarily on the purpose of providing information through the building of a database (DB). The agenda discussed and its results, accomplishment record of recommendations and individual information of participants in the annual meetings shall be upgraded and managed constantly. Members can share enough information through the website, and can present more substantial and specific opinions when they attend meetings. If the website can perform these functions of providing information perfectly, the website can grow further to e-Business or an exchange of academic literatures.

The establishment of an administration office and building a website are the top priorities for the growth of the WLN.

### 4. To secure government support.

For the implementation of the aforementioned projects, we need government support. For the establishment of an administration office, several physical conditions must be solved. We need money to open an office, recruit full time workers, and build a website. After all, the funds needed must be shared amongst member countries of the WLN. For securing the necessary budget for each government, we need strong measures that recommendation to ministers meeting of APEC. It may be

difficult to continue without government support in the initial stage. In Korea, recently, government policies for supporting women has been much reinforced and improved in quality as well. For example, it is the operation of exclusive funds for women. The government investment ratio into the existing private funds is increasing. A new government department that manages and supports women corporations is found, and is now in operation. As the majority of women corporations are small and medium sized companies, the 'Balanced growth support team' of the Korean Small and Medium Business Administration is an exclusive department for supporting women businesses. Periodic surveys on the status of women businesses are also carried out. Objective statistical data helps support the establishment of support policy for women businesses. I hope that members of the WLN can present more examples, and share more information in the future. The information on how women leaders in each economy have changed and contributed to national policy is very important. Exchanging this information is also one key functions of the WLN.

In conclusion, I believe that the WLN can attempt a project to find the '10 Best Businesses Selected by the WLN' as an annual project to explore the promising examples and to expand our activity within the world of women business leaders.

Thank you.